

PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES IN A PILOT STUDY FOR METHAMPHETAMINE WITHDRAWAL TREATMENT: IMPLICATIONS FOR RETENTION

Agency and Embodiment

“I’ve been shocked at how effective it has been... I just have no cravings. I feel completely normal. I’ve had an appetite. I’ve been socially active in here. I’ve been reading, which I, you know, haven’t done for a fairly long time, you know. Yeah, it’s been awesome, to tell the truth.” - Jesse

Caring - Trust

“It was clear that the nursing staff knew what to expect. And, also the attentiveness. I guess I probably wasn’t expecting the fact that the nurses would notice if you hadn’t slept well. They’d have conversations with my mother and I guess with you - Charlie

Safety

“And just felt ... one single reason I was coming to [Inner-Sydney hospital] is ‘cause I felt like it was a safe place... I still believed it was a safer place than on the streets or anyone else’s house that I’d go to”
- Blake

Communication

“Perhaps if we talked more about me as a person before getting here and the people that I was gonna be dealing with, to get to know them a little bit first, it would be easier to bring the situation about.”
- Danny

By focusing on these themes when designing future clinical trials, researchers can not only **improve the clinical trial experience for participants**, but also a person’s subsequent and **related decision to remain enrolled in the study.**

Introduction

- Poor retention in undermines trust in clinical trials
- Few studies investigate participant experiences in substance use trials
- This study seeks to understand the experiences of people who completed a clinical trial of a pharmacotherapy for methamphetamine (MA) withdrawal

Methods

- Thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews
- Eight people who participated in an inpatient clinical trial of lisdexamfetamine for acute MA withdrawal

Results

- Research procedures, the research setting, and the investigational product affected their experiences
- Of particular importance to participants were **transparent and low burden trial procedures, a welcoming trial environment, trusting relationships and effective communication**
- These were **linked with the participants’ subsequent decision to remain enrolled**

Discussion

- Core elements to explore in future co-design processes include **strengthening participant agency, trust in service providers, feelings of safety and open communication between researchers, service providers and participants**
- The experiences of participants in this trial related to communication, safety and medication effectiveness may have relevance to *any* person experiencing clinical trial participation
- By including the experiences of trial participants in future clinical trial design, researchers can not only influence the clinical trial experience for participants, but also a person’s subsequent and related decision to remain enrolled

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Disclosure of Interest Statement: LSA is supported by an NDARC PhD Scholarship. MF has received unrestricted funding for research purposes from Indivior and Sequiris. SS has received clinical research supplies from Alkermes. NE and KJS are employed by NCCRED. No other investigators have any conflicts of interest to declare. This study was funded by the National Centre for Clinical Research on Emerging Drugs (NCCRED). NCCRED is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care.